

REMARKS

Upon entry of this Amendment, claims 6-8 will be pending in the above-identified application. Claim 6 is herein amended to incorporate the features described in base claim 2 and intervening claim 3. Claims 2-5, 9 and 10 are herein cancelled. No new matter is entered.

It is respectfully submitted that this paper is fully responsive to the Office action mailed on January 18, 2008.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 6-8 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. However, the examiner acknowledged that these claims would be allowable if rewritten into independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Accordingly, to expedite prosecution, Applicants hereby amend claim 6 to incorporate the limitations of the base claim and intervening claims.

In view of this amendment, Applicants request that claims 6-8 be allowed.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §102

Claim 2 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by *Kuwagara* (Patent No. 6,685,355).

Applicants respectfully disagree with the examiner's characterization of the cited reference and submit that claim 2 is not anticipated by *Kuwahara*.

Nevertheless, Applicants submit that the anticipation rejection is now moot because the claim has been cancelled.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 2-5, 9 and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being unpatentable over *Kuwahara*.

Applicants respectfully disagree with the examiner's characterization of the cited reference and submit that the claims 2-5, 9 and 10 are not obvious in view of *Kuwahara*.

Nevertheless, Applicants submit that the obviousness rejection is now moot because claims 2-5, 9 and 10 have been cancelled.

Conclusion

In view of the aforementioned amendments and accompanying remarks, Applicants submit that the claims, as herein amended, are in condition for allowance. Applicants request such action at an early date.

If the Examiner believes that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

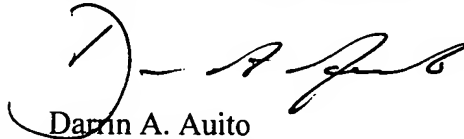
Application No.: 10/572,564
Art Unit: 3632

Amendment under 37 CFR §1.111
Attorney Docket No.: 062243

If this paper is not timely filed, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. The fees for such an extension or any other fees that may be due with respect to this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-2866.

Respectfully submitted,

WESTERMAN, HATTORI, DANIELS & ADRIAN, LLP

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Darin A. Auito', is written over a circular line.

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